

28049

SERVICE DATE - JULY 16, 1997

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD¹

[Finance Docket No. 32530]

Kansas City Southern Railway Company -- Construction and
Operation exemption -- Geismar Industrial area near Gonzales and
Sorrento, Louisiana

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board

ACTION: Notice of availability of draft environmental impact
statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: The Kansas City Southern Railway Company (KCS) applied to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), now the Surface Transportation Board (Board), for authority to construct and operate an 8.62-mile rail line from the Geismar Industrial area to its mainline near Gonzales and Sorrento, in Ascension Parish, Louisiana. On November 5, 1996, the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) issued a final scope of study for this EIS. SEA considered the potential environmental impacts associated with KCS' preferred route, several alternative routes, and a "no build" alternative. SEA is issuing the draft EIS for public review and comment. Comments must be submitted no later than 45 days after the publication date in the Federal Register. If you wish to file comments on the draft EIS, send an original and 10 copies to: Vernon A. Williams, Secretary, Surface Transportation Board, Suite 700, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423. Mark the lower left corner of the envelope: Attention: Michael Dalton, Environmental Comments, Finance Docket No. 32530.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Dalton, Section of Environmental Analysis, Room 528, Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423; phone number (202) 565-1530. TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Over 600 individuals on the current service list filed form letters supporting or opposing this proceeding, but did not actively participate. Due to limited resources, the Board will serve copies of the draft EIS on 20 individuals listed on the service list as Parties of Record. The Concerned Citizens of Ascension Parish, who is a Party of Record, represents many of the individuals on the service list and, as previously noted, will be served a copy of the draft EIS. In addition, SEA will distribute copies of the draft EIS to: (1) those federal, state, and local agencies that participated in this environmental review, (2) all individuals who requested a copy of the EIS at the scoping hearing, and (3) elected and other interested government officials. SEA also will make available

for public review additional copies of the draft EIS at the following locations: Ascension Parish Public Library, 708 South Irma Boulevard, Gonzales, LA (20 copies) and Prairieville Branch (5 copies); and Ascension Parish Office, 305 Chetimaches Street, Donaldsonville, LA (25 copies).

The notice of availability of the draft EIS will be announced in the Federal Register and served on all parties to the proceeding.

By the Board, Elaine K. Kaiser, Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.

Vernon A. Williams
Secretary

1. The ICC Termination Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104-88, 109 Stat. 803 (the Act), which was enacted on December 29, 1995, and took effect on January 1, 1996, abolished the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) and transferred certain functions and proceedings to the Surface Transportation Board (Board). Section 204(b)(1) of the Act provides, in general, that proceedings pending before the ICC on the effective date of that legislation shall be decided under the law in effect prior to January 1, 1996, insofar as they involve functions retained by the Act. This notice relates to a proceeding that was pending with the ICC prior to January 1, 1996, and to functions that are subject to Board jurisdiction pursuant to section 49 U.S.C. 10901. Therefore, this notice applies the law in effect prior to the Act, and citations are to the former section of the statute, unless otherwise indicated.